



SOUTHERN REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER

On the Bayou

APRIL 2020



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Message from the Director

Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar

These anxious and unusual times bring unforeseen difficulties. But the best of human nature can rise to the challenge, and we are resilient folks having gone through the likes of Hurricane Katrina.

With all the tragic events happening in the world as a result of COVID-19, now might seem like an unusual time to talk about being positive. Yet staying positive is at the core of successful coping in a crisis. Now, more than ever, is the time for us to be proactive about creating small moments of happiness in our days:

Savor the small moments. Even during lockdown you still have many small moments to enjoy: the smell of coffee, the feel of the warm shower on your back and so on.

Strengthen your connections: for those of us in family lockdown, now is the opportunity to spend quality time with our loved ones.

Make the most of the time available to you to better yourself. Here is a chance to do some self-reflection.

Look for the good in others. These types of crises can bring out both the worst and the best in human nature. I like to think the best in human nature is rising to the coronavirus challenge. Philanthropists are donating money to scientists to find a cure. Doctors and medical staff are working overtime to help sick patients. Neighbors are putting together care packages for people in need. When we tune into these positive aspects of the crisis, we are united in hope.

Capturing the small moments will help as we go forward into the unknown. Being positive can make us more resilient, increase our immunity, and help us think more clearly. Think positive with patience, and we can come out of this experience stronger. This shall also pass.

Women's History Month

Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

Hello from the SRRC Women's History Month Committee.

We certainly hope that you are all well in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. March is still Women's History Month and we would like to share with you some fun facts and trivia since our event has been cancelled.

This year is the celebration of the Centennial of the 19th Amendment (1920-2020). There are many interesting articles online regarding this topic if you are inclined. We thought you may enjoy this great five minute video that gives a brief history of the 19th Amendment.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9LmBgY-F5A>

Do you know?

What were the colors on the sashes worn by the suffragettes during their parades/marches?

On what day was the Women's Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC and why was it held on that day?

Thanks very much for your interest and be well.



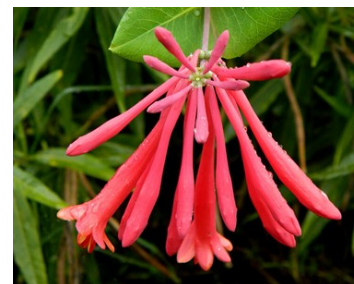
Events and Observances (cont.)

SRRC Raingarden and Earth Day

Submitted by Cathy Mason

Hello from the Raingarden!

I hope some of you had the chance to stop and look over the raingarden in the past two weeks! The irises were really putting on a show; now its time for the native coral honeysuckle to start calling in the humming-birds. Those long tubular red flowers are a perfect fit for the hummers long, slim bill. This plant is vining along the fence to the back of the raingarden.



In the next 1-2 weeks we will see the Mamou (*Erythrina herbacea*) start flowering. I cut it back early this month, so you won't see as many flowers, but it will still bloom. Watch out for the thorns....these guys are worse than roses!

Also, the Monarchs have found the milkweed that is planted in the raingarden....all you will be able to see is the bare stems that are left behind!



Earth Day Celebration

The Earth Day Committee planned a number of events for April 22, 2020. Unfortunately, it looks like COVID 19 has shut all of that down. Instead, we would like to encourage everyone to join in our Earth Day **EcoChallenge**. Stephanie Gross has set up a Team (USDA-SRRC) on the website, so we can all challenge each other to a virtual game.

This is our link for the USDA-SRRC EarthDay EcoChallenge! Hope you enjoy the experience!

Join my team - USDA SRRC: [Earth Day Ecochallenge](#)

The Challenge runs from Wednesday, April 01 to Thursday, April 30 and is a great opportunity for you to connect your values with your actions.

Remember, this counts as your EMS training, plus it is good for the environment! I'm looking forward to what we can accomplish!

Events and Observances (cont.)

SEA Business Operations Meeting

SEA Leadership, along with our ARS Administrators and many Section Heads from HQ visited SRRC for the SEA Business Operations meeting on March 3rd-6th.

Noted speakers from headquarters were:

- **Chavonda Jacobs-Young**, ARS Administrator
- **Simon Liu**, Associate Administrator, Research Management & Operations
- **Sharon Drumm**, ARS Chief of Staff
- **Michael Arnold**, Director, Budget & Program Management Staff
- **Joon Park**, Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management
- **Mojdeh Bahar**, Assistant Administrator, Technology Transfer Office

Other notable speakers from AFM and SEA Administrative Office were:

- **Archie Tucker**, Area Director
- **Ellen Harris**, Associate Area Director
- **Prasanna Gowda**, Associate Area Director
- **Ariel Szogi**, RLAC Representative
- **David Shapiro-Ilan**, Scientific Quality Review Officer
- **Bradley Khaner**, Senior Ethics Program Advisor, USDA Office of Ethics
- **Bryan Norrington**, Director, Office of International Research Programs
- **Willis Collie**, Director, Human Resources Division
- **Lorna Drennen**, REE Chief Information Officer and Director, IT Services Division
- **Theresa Joseph**, SEA Administrative Office Director
- **Kathy Sciannella**, Section Head, Human Resources
- **Brenda Whitwell**, Section Head, Financial Management, Travel & Agreements
- **Cindy Cose**, Section Head, Acquisition & Personal Property /Fleet

Having over 80 attendees at the Center gave us an opportunity to showcase our research and our facilities. Everyone attending the meeting commented on how well our facility is maintained and managed. They were very impressed with our research program and our hospitality.



Recognition

On the occasion of the REE Leadership meeting held on February 25-27, **Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar** was recognized by ARS Administrator, Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young for leading various task orders in the ACES project. The award was presented by Dr. Scott Hutchins, the Deputy Under Secretary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Research, Education, and Economics mission area.



Inaugural Postdoc Advisory Council

We are pleased to announce the Inaugural Postdoc Advisory Council to the ARS Postdoc Network.

The council is a representation of the diverse experiences, expertise and research of the Agricultural Research Service. Dr. Jacobs-Young received dozens of applications from across all ARS areas and it was a challenge to choose from such a qualified selection pool. The representatives will be an avenue for new ideas that postdocs in their area may have, and as a voice for questions and concerns for those they represent. I am happy to announce that **Drs. Lina Castano-Duque** (FFS postdoc) and **Jacobs Jordan** (CCU Postdoc) have been selected from SRRC to be part of the Inaugural ARS Postdoc Advisory Council. **Dr. Matthew Hillyer** (CCU) was also selected and will serve as the Communication Director for the ARS Postdoc Council.

Congratulations to all the three excellent representatives from SRRC.

Women Making a Difference in the World of Agricultural Research

In honor of Women's History Month, ARS is sharing stories on four of its researchers whose career work has impacted the lives of all Americans. Our own **Dr. Soheila Maleki** has been recognized as one of the women:



Soheila Maleki, a chemist at the Food Processing and Sensory Quality Research Unit was named a 2018 finalist for a Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal, which recognizes Federal employees for outstanding achievement in making our nation safer, stronger, and healthier. She was recognized for her pioneering research to improve the quality of life for millions of Americans who suffer from food allergies, particularly from peanuts. Soheila's groundbreaking research changed how people are tested for peanut allergies today and showed that food processing methods can also affect the allergic potential of food. The research findings Maleki co-authored on preempting peanut allergies in at-risk infants prompted the American Medical Association to revise its guidelines on managing and diagnosing food allergies. Soheila has been a member for the Scientific Advisory Council to the National Peanut Board (NPB), now called (NPB's) Food Allergy Education and Advisory Council. She has served on this committee for 20 years. Maleki has contributed to the improvement of detection kits for food companies to assess cross contamination of allergens on product lines. Maleki's research has helped characterize the very first food (peanut) to ever be developed as a pharmaceutical. In 2019, she served as a member of the Food and Drug Administration Allergen Product Advisory Panel on peanut allergen powder to help reduce allergic reactions to peanuts.

Safety Corner

Submitted by: **Shannon Beltz**

- Please complete your OMSP form. We will need to start this quickly, so I will need all of your signed forms. Do the best you can. If signatures are hard right now, then just fill out the exposure information and I can go from there. Please reach out if you have any questions.
- Thanks to everyone for completing the liquid nitrogen AND Slips, Trips, and Falls Trainings (a few folks still have to do this one). I very much appreciate your help with getting these done!
- I am currently required to maintain a spreadsheet of potential COVID-19 exposures for SRRC employees. This information is being requested by Headquarters and will not include your name when I send the report.

This is the information I need:

1. You have been potentially exposed to someone who has COVID-19 (a member of your household is ill, a member of your household works with people who are ill, etc)
2. You suspect you may have COVID-19
3. You are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19
4. You have been tested for COVID-19

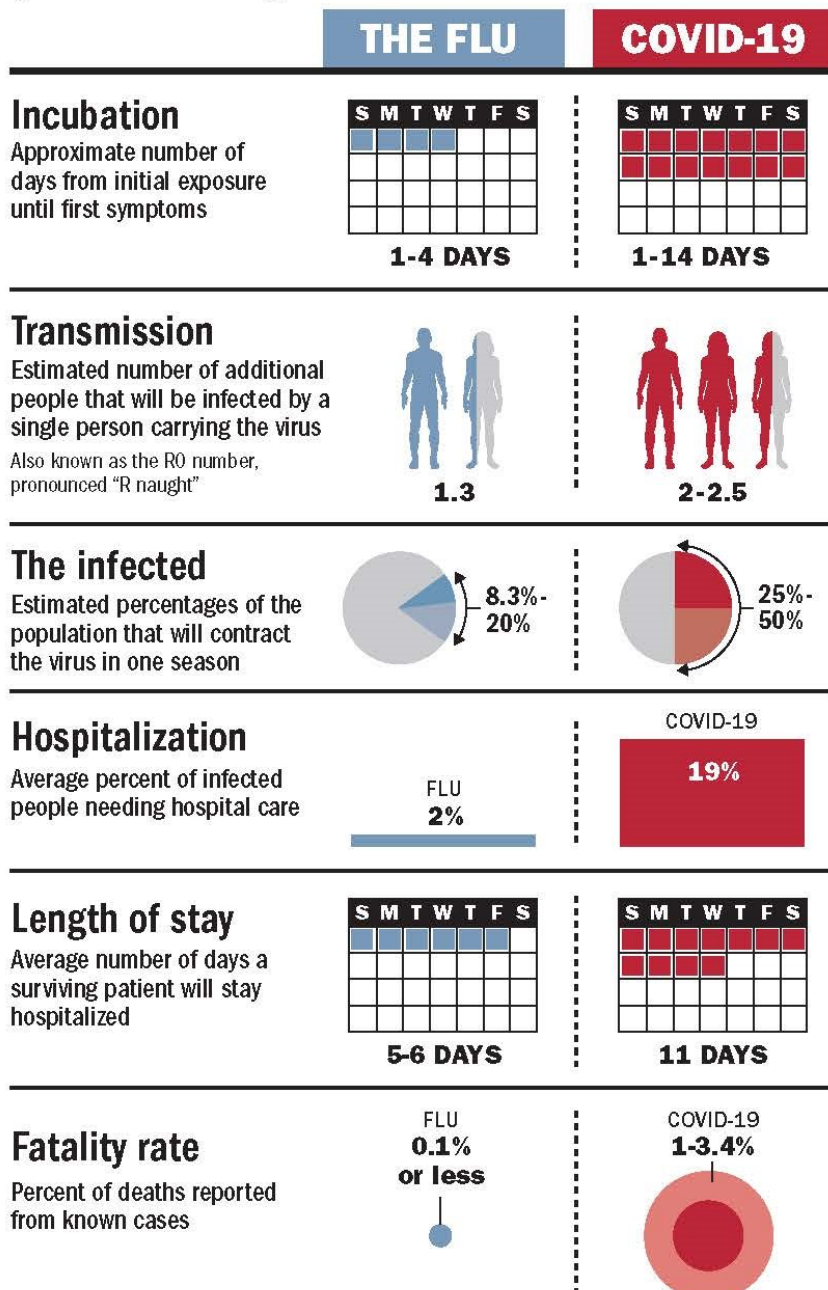
If you do not believe you have been exposed, then you DO NOT need to reply. A reply is required if you believe you might have been exposed. Thank you.

I am including my cell phone below, I am available for calls or via text or e-mail. Please take care and keep in touch. I certainly hope that you are all doing well.

Shannon Beltz, 504.376.9037

Comparing the flu and COVID-19

Is the coronavirus worse than the flu? Yes. Not to downplay influenza, as it infects countless people each year, kills tens of thousands and more should be done to address it. However, the flu does not overwhelm hospitals as COVID-19 is already doing, nor is the fatality rate as high. Here's a list of comparisons that show why hospitals, communities and governments are on edge:



Sources: CDC, WHO, NCBI, NPR; Inspired by a chart from Vox

Graphic by **DAN SWENSON**

New Walkway Bridge

Submitted by: Matt King

As part to the continuing facility upgrade of infrastructure and facilities, the existing deteriorating wood 3 ft. wide footbridge was replaced with a new 5 ft. wide composite material footbridge.

The new bridge will allow people and cart traffic to walk across simultaneously, without having to move out of the way of each other. Solar lighting was installed to provide safe travels after and before daylight hours, if needed.

We hope you take the time to travel this much-improved footbridge and enjoy the trip outside, or the trip to the greenhouse.



New Employee

Submitted by: Janell Becker

Please welcome a new employee to SRRC:

Everette Woods is the new Program Support Assistant for the Cotton Structure and Quality Research Unit. Everette is a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard.



Recent SRRC Publications

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski

Full text pdfs of SRRC publications are available in the Eprints database via “Library” link on the SRRC Intranet page: <http://nola.srrc.usda.gov:8000/srrcmenf.htm>

Click on the article’s title below to launch the pdf from Eprints.

Dowd, Michael K. and McCarty, Jack C. and Shockey, Jay M. and Jenkins, Johnnie N. (2020) [Registration of Four Upland Cotton Germplasm Lines with Elevated Levels of Seed Oil Oleic Acid](#). Journal of Plant Registrations, 14. pp. 64-71.

Hao, Xiying and He, Zhongqi (2020) [Pelletizing Animal Manures for On- and Off-Farm Use](#). In: Animal Manure: Production, Characteristics, Environmental Concerns and Management. ASA Special Publication 67. ASA and SSSA, Madison, WI. pp. 323-344.

He, Zhongqi (2020) [Organic Animal Farming and Comparative Studies of Conventional and Organic Manures](#). In: Animal Manure: Production, Characteristics, Environmental Concerns and Management. ASA Special Publication 67. ASA and SSSA, Madison, WI. pp. 165-182.

He, Zhongqi and Pagliari, Paulo H. and Waldrip, Heidi M. (2020) [Advances and Outlook of Manure Production and Management](#). In: Animal Manure: Production, Characteristics, Environmental Concerns and Management. ASA Special Publication 67. ASA and SSSA, Madison, WI. pp. 373-384.

Hron, Rebecca J. and Hinchliffe, Doug and Mattison, Christopher P. and Condon, Brian (2019) [The Effect of Cotton Fiber Inclusion on the Hard Surface Cleaning Capacity of Nonwoven Substrates](#). Journal of Engineered Fibers and Fabrics, 14. pp. 1-13.

Nam, Sunghyun and Hillyer, Matthew B. and Condon, Brian (2020) [Method for Identifying the Triple Transition \(Glass Transition-Dehydrationcrystallization\) of Amorphous Cellulose in Cotton](#). Carbohydrate Research, 228 (11537). pp. 1-10.